

**CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

**September 21, 2004
MEETING NO. 10-2004**

APPLICATION: HDC04-00314

DATE FILED: September 8, 2004

**APPLICANT/
OWNER:** Kathleen Hayes
419 Reading Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850



PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

The house at 419 Reading Avenue was built circa 1896 and has significant historic value as a good example of the first phase of development within the Rockville Park subdivision. The historic massing is evident, with a clear distinction between the original house and the later (ca. 1980) addition. The property is generous, including lots 19, 20 and 21. It spans between Reading Avenue and a platted alley, which has been subsequently abandoned.

There are two accessory buildings at the rear of the property. The accessory building located in the southwest corner of the lot is the subject of this application. The small wood framed garage fronts the [now abandoned] alley. At the time of designation in 2003, this building was noted as being in very poor condition, with roof, wall and foundation damage.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS AT THIS ADDRESS:

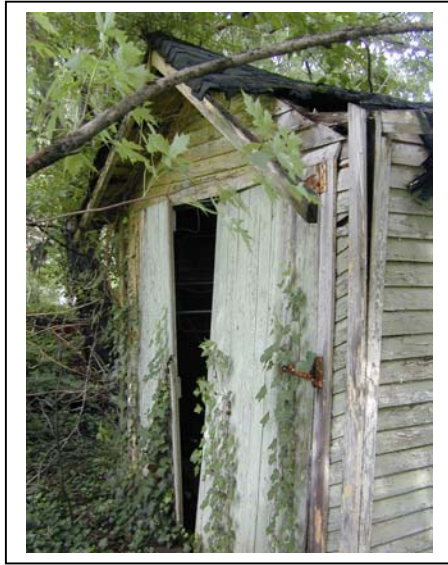
2004 Historic Designation

HDC2004-0289 Request to remove vinyl siding from 1980 addition and replace with Hardiplank; to remove rear concrete block steps and build wood steps: approved 4/15/04

REQUEST: The Applicant requests a Certificate of Approval to demolish the rear accessory structure in the SW corner of the property. This was discussed at the



time of designation, with the applicant noting that the original garage building was in this condition when they bought the property in 1994.



Alley view of garage



Interior view of roof

1. *Historic, archeological, or architectural value and significance of the site or structure and its relationship to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding area.*

The small accessory structure has value as it attests to the early use of alleys in the subdivisions. In the late 19th century, alleys were seen as a way to separate private, secondary activities from the main public roadway.

2. *The relationship of the exterior architectural features of the structure to the remainder of the entire structure and to the surrounding area.*

Today, this portion of the alley system in the Rockville Park subdivision has been abandoned. The alley property has been divided amongst the adjacent property owners. Much of the alley is now individually fenced into private yards. There is no longer any access to this garage along an alleyway. The owner has a driveway off of Reading.

3. *The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.*

The proposal is a follow-up of the designation discussion and considerations. The accessory structure is in derelict condition. The walls are falling away from the minimal foundation, and there are holes in the roof.

4. *To any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.*

The small garage has significance as evidence of the intentions of the original platting, with its dual system of alleys and streets. With the abandonment of the alley, there is no public access to the back yard area where the garage sits. That may have been the reason why the building was left to deteriorate to the condition one sees today.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the HDC approve this demolition, as part of the designation consideration from early 2004.